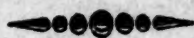


THE
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Divinity.

EVIDENCES OF THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

Extracted from the new Edinburgh Encyclopædia.

(Continued from page 9.)

171. **THE** application of Lord Bacon's philosophy to the study of external nature was a happy epoch in the history of physical science. It is not long since this application has been extended to the study of moral and intellectual phenomena. All that we contend for is, that our subjects should have the benefit of the same application; and we count it hard, while, in every other department of inquiry, a respect for truth is found sufficient to repress the appetite for system-building, that theology, the loftiest and most inaccessible of all the sciences, should still remain infected with a spirit so exploded, and so unphilosophical; and that the fancy, and theory, and unsupported speculation, so current among the Deists and demi-infidels of the day, should be held paramount to the authority of facts, which have come down to us with a weight of evidence and testimony, that is quite unexampled in the history of ancient times.

172. What is science, but a record of observed phenomena, grouped together according to certain points of resemblance, which have been suggested by an actual attention to the phenomena themselves? We never think of questioning the existence of the phenomena, after we have demonstrated the genuineness and authenticity of the record. After this is demonstrated, the singular or unexpected nature of the phenomena is not suffered to weaken their credibility,—a credibility which can only be destroyed by the authority of our own personal observation, or some other record possessed of equal or superior pretensions. But in none of the inductive sciences is it in the power of a student to verify every thing by his own personal

observation. He must put up with the observations of others, brought home to the convictions of his own mind by creditable testimony. In the science of geology, this is eminently the case. In a science of such extent, our principles must be in part founded upon the observations of others, transmitted to us from a distant country. And in a science the processes of which are so lengthened in point of time, our principles should also in part be founded on the observations of others, transmitted to us from a remote antiquity. Any observations of our own are so limited, both in point of space and of time, that we never think of opposing their authority to the evidence which is laid before us. Our whole attention is directed to the validity of the record; and the moment that this validity is established, we hold it incumbent upon us to submit our minds to the entire and unmodified impression of the testimony contained in it. Now, all that we ask is, that the same process of investigation be observed in theology, which is held to be so sound and so legitimate in other sciences. In a science of such extent, as to embrace the wide domain of moral and intelligent nature, we feel the littleness of that range to which our own personal observations are confined. We shall be glad, not merely of the information transmitted to us from a distant country, but of the authentic information transmitted to us by any other order of beings, in some distant and unknown part of the creation. In a science, too, which has for its object the lengthened processes of the divine administration, we should like if any record of past times could enable us to extend our observations beyond the limits of our own ephemeral experience; and if there are any events of a former age possessed of such a peculiar and decisive character, as would help us to some satisfactory conclusion in this greatest and most interesting of the sciences.

173. On a subject so much above us and beyond us, we would never think of opposing any preconceptions to the evidence of history. We would maintain the humility of the inductive spirit. We would cast about for facts, and events, and appearances. We would offer our minds as a blank surface to every thing that came to them, supported by unexceptionable evidence. It is not upon the nature of the facts themselves, that we would pronounce upon their credibility, but upon the nature of that testimony by which they were supported. Our whole attention would be directed to the authority of the record. After this was established, we would surrender our whole understanding to its contents. We would school down every antipathy within us, and disown it as a childish affection, unworthy of a philosopher who professes to follow truth through all the disgusts and discouragements which surround it. There are men of splendid reputation in our enlightened circles, who never attended to this speculation, and who annex to the gospel of Christ

nothing else than ideas of superstition and vulgarity. In braving their contempt, we would feel ourselves in the best element for the display and exercise of the philosophical temper. We would rejoice in the omnipotence of truth, and anticipate, in triumph, the victory which it must accomplish over the pride of science and the fastidiousness of literature. It would not be the enthusiasm of a visionary which would support us, but the inward working of the very same principle which sustained Galileo, when he adhered to the result of his experiments, and Newton, when he opposed his measurements and observations to the tide of prejudice he had to encounter from the prevailing taste and philosophy of the times.

174. We conceive, that inattention to the above principles has led many of the most popular and respected writers in the Deistical controversy to introduce a great deal of discussion that is foreign to the merits of the question altogether; and in this way the attention is often turned away from the point in which the main strength of the argument lies. An infidel, for example, objects against one of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. To repel the objection, the Christian conceives it necessary to vindicate the reasonableness of that doctrine, and to shew how consistent it is with all those antecedent conceptions which we derived from the light of natural religion. All this we count superfluous. It is imposing an unnecessary task upon ourselves. Enough for us to have established the authority of the Christian revelation upon the ground of its historical evidence. All that remains is to submit our minds to the fair interpretation of Scripture. Yes; but how do you dispose of the objection drawn from the light of natural religion? In precisely the same way that we would dispose of an objection drawn from some speculative system, against the truth of any physical fact that has been well established by observation or testimony. We would disown the system, and oppose the obstinacy of the fact to all the elegance and ingenuity of the speculation.

175. We are sensible that this is not enough to satisfy a numerous class of very sincere and well disposed Christians.— There are many of this description, who, antecedent to the study of the Christian revelation altogether, repose a very strong confidence in the light of natural religion, and think that, upon the mere strength of its evidence, they can often pronounce with a considerable degree of assurance on the character of the divine administration. To such as these something more is necessary than the external evidences on which Christianity rests. You must reconcile the doctrines of Christianity with those previous conceptions which the light of nature has given them; and a great deal of elaborate argument is often expended in bringing about this accommodation. It is, of course, a work of greater

difficulty, to make Christians of this description of people, though, in point of fact, this difficulty has been overcome, in a way the most masterly and decisive, by one of the soundest and most philosophical of our theologians.

176. To another description of Christians, this attempt to reconcile the doctrines of Christianity with the light of natural religion is superfluous. Give them historical evidence for the truth of Christianity, and all that natural religion may have taught them will fly like so many visionary phantoms before the light of its overbearing authority. With them the argument is reduced to a narrower compass. Is the testimony of the apostles and first Christians sufficient to establish the credibility of the facts which are recorded in the New-Testament? The question is made to rest exclusively on the character of this testimony, and the circumstances attending it, and no antecedent theology of their own is suffered to mingle with the investigation. If the historical evidence of Christianity is found to be conclusive, they conceive the investigation to be at an end; and that nothing remains on their part, but an act of unconditional submission to all its doctrines.

177. Though it might be proper, in the present state of opinion, to accommodate to both these cases, yet we profess ourselves to belong to the latter description of Christians. We hold by the total insufficiency of natural religion to pronounce upon the intrinsic merits of any revelation, and think that the authority of every revelation rests exclusively upon its external evidences, and upon such marks of honesty in the composition itself as would apply to any human performance. We rest this opinion, not upon any fanatical expression of the ignorance of man, or how sinful it is for a weak and guilty mortal to pronounce upon the counsels of heaven, and the laws of the divine administration; we disown this presumption, not merely because it is sinful, but because we conceive it to be unphilosophical, and precisely analogous to that theorising *a priori* spirit, which the wisdom of Bacon has banished from all the schools of philosophy.

178. For the satisfaction of the first class, we refer them to that argument which has been prosecuted with so much ability and success by Bishop Butler, in his *Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion*. It is not so much the object of this author to found any positive argument on the accordancy which subsists between the processes of the divine administration in nature, and the processes ascribed to God by revelation, as to repel the argument founded upon their supposed discordancy. To one of the second class, the argument of Bishop Butler is not called for; but as to one of the first class, we can conceive nothing more calculated to quiet his difficulties. He believes a God, and he

must therefore believe the character and existence of God to be reconcileable with all that he observes in the events and phenomena around him. He questions the claims of the New-Testament to be a revelation from heaven; because he conceives, that it ascribes a plan and an economy to the Supreme Being, which are unworthy of his character. We offer no positive solution of this difficulty. We profess ourselves to be too little acquainted with the character of God; and that in this little corner of his works, we see not far enough to offer any decision on the merits of a government, which embraces worlds, and reaches eternity. We think we do enough, if we give a sufficiency of external proof for the New-Testament being a true and authentic message from heaven; and that therefore nothing remains for us, but to attend and to submit to it. But the argument of Bishop Butler enables us to do still more than this. It enables us to say, that the very thing objected against in Christianity exists in nature; and that therefore the same God who is the author of nature, may be the author of Christianity. We do not say that any positive evidence can be founded upon this analogy. But in as far as it goes to repel the objection, it is triumphant. A man has no right to retain his theism, if he rejects Christianity upon difficulties to which natural religion is equally liable. If Christianity tells us, that the guilt of a father has brought suffering and vice upon his posterity, it is what we see exemplified in a thousand instances amongst the families around us. If it tells us, that the innocent have suffered for the guilty, it is nothing more than what all history and all' observation have made perfectly familiar to us. If it tells us of one portion of the human race being distinguished by the sovereign will of the Almighty for superior knowledge or superior privileges, it only adds one inequality more to the many inequalities which we perceive every day in the gifts of nature, of fortune, and of providence. In short, without entering into all the details of that argument, which Butler has brought forward in a way so masterly and decisive, there is not a single impeachment which can be offered against the God of Christianity, that may not, if consistently proceeded upon, be offered against the God of Nature itself; if the one be unworthy of God, the other is equally so; and if, in spite of these difficulties, you still retain the conviction, that there is a God of Nature, it is not fair or rational to suffer them to outweigh all that positive evidence and testimony, which have been adduced for proving that the same God is the God of Christianity also.

179. If Christianity be still resisted, it appears to us that the only consistent refuge is Atheism. The very same peculiarities in the dispensation of the gospel, which lead the infidel to reject it as unworthy of God, go to prove, that nature is unworthy of

him, and land us in the melancholy conclusion, that whatever theory can be offered as to the mysterious origin and existence of the things which be, they are not under the dominion of a supreme and intelligent mind. Nor do we look upon Atheism as a more hopeless species of infidelity than Deism, unless in so far as it proves a more stubborn disposition of the heart to resist every religious conviction. Viewed purely as an intellectual subject, we look upon the mind of an Atheist, as in a better state of preparation for the proofs of Christianity than the mind of a Deist. The one is a blank surface, on which evidence may make a fair impression, and where the finger of history may inscribe its credible and well-attested information. The other is occupied with preconceptions. It will not take what history offers to it. It puts itself into the same unphilosophical posture, in which the mind of a prejudiced Cartesian opposed its theory of the heavens to the demonstrations and measurements of Newton. The theory of the Deist upon a subject, where truth is still more inaccessible, and speculation still more presumptuous, sets him to resist the only safe and competent evidence that can be appealed to. What was originally the evidence of observation, and is now transformed into the evidence of testimony, comes down to us in a series of historical documents, the closest and most consistent that all antiquity can furnish. It is the unfortunate theory which forms the grand obstacle to the admission of the Christian miracles, and which leads the Deist to an exhibition of himself so unphilosophical, as that of trampling on the soundest laws of evidence, by bringing a historical fact under the tribunal of a theoretical principle. The deistical speculation of Rousseau, by which he neutralised the testimony of the first Christians, is as complete a transgression against the temper and principles of true science, as a category of Aristotle, when employed to overrule an experiment in chemistry. But however this be, it is evident, that Rousseau would have given a readier reception to the gospel history, had his mind not been pre-occupied with the speculation; and the negative state of Atheism would have been more favourable to the admission of those facts, which are connected with the origin and establishment of our religion in the world.

180. This suggests the way in which the evidence for Christianity should be carried home to the mind of an Atheist. He sees nothing in the phenomena around him, that can warrant him to believe in the existence of a living and intelligent principle, which gave birth and movement to all things. He does not say that he would refuse credit to the existence of God upon sufficient evidence, but he says, that there are not such appearances of design in nature, as to supply him with that evidence. He does not deny the existence of God to be a possible truth;

but he affirms, that while there is nothing before him but the consciousness of what passes within, and the observation of what passes without, it remains an assertion destitute of proof, and can have no more effect upon his conviction than any other nonentity of the imagination. There is a mighty difference between *not proven* and *disproven*. We see nothing in the argument of the Atheists, which goes farther than to establish the former sentence upon the question of God's existence. It is altogether an argument *ab ignorantia*; and the same ignorance which restrains them from asserting in positive terms that God exists, equally restrains them from asserting in positive terms that God does not exist. The assertion may be offered, that in some distant regions of the creation, there are tracts of space which, instead of being occupied like the tracts around us with suns and planetary systems, teem only with animated beings, who, without being supported like us on the firm surface of a world, have the power of spontaneous movements in free spaces. We cannot say that the assertion is not true, but we can say that it is not proven. It carries in it no positive character either of truth or falsehood, and may therefore be admitted on appropriate and satisfying evidence. But till that evidence comes, the mind is in a state entirely neutral; and such we conceive to be the neutral state of the Atheist, as to what he holds to be the unproved assertion of the existence of God.

181. To the neutral mind of the Atheist, then, unfurnished as it is with any previous conception, we offer the historical evidence of Christianity. We do not ask him to presume the existence of God. We ask him to examine the miracles of the New-Testament merely as recorded events, and to admit no other principle into the investigation, than those which are held to be satisfying and decisive, on any other subject of written testimony. The sweeping principle upon which Rousseau, filled with his own assumptions, condemned the historical evidence for the truth of the gospel narrative, can have no influence on the blank and unoccupied mind of an Atheist. He has no presumptions upon the subject; for to his eye the phenomena of nature sit so loose and unconnected with that intelligent Being, to whom they have been referred as their origin, that he does not feel himself entitled, from these phenomena, to ascribe any existence, any character, any attributes, or any method of administration to such a Being. He is therefore in the last possible condition for submitting his understanding to the entire impression of the historical evidence. These difficulties which perplex the Deists who cannot recognize in the God of the New-Testament the same features and the same principles in which they have invested the God of Nature, are no difficulties to him. He has no God of Nature to confront with that real though invisible power which lay at the bottom of those astonishing miracles, on which his-

tory has stamped her most authentic characters. Though the power which presided there should be an arbitrary, an unjust, or a malignant being, all this may startle a Deist, but it will not prevent a consistent Atheist from acquiescing in any legitimate inference, to which the miracles of the gospel, viewed in the simple light of historical facts, may chance to carry him. He cannot bring his antecedent information into play upon this question. He professes to have no antecedent information on the subject; and this sense of his entire ignorance, which lies at the bottom of his Atheism, would expunge from his mind all that is theoretical, and make it the passive recipient of every thing which observation offers to its notice, or which credible testimony has brought down to it of the history of past ages.

182. What then, we ask, does the Atheist make of the miracles of the New-Testament? If he questions their truth, he must do it upon grounds that are purely historical. He is precluded from every other ground by the very principle on which he has rested his Atheism; and we therefore, upon the strength of that testimony which has been already exhibited, press the admission of these miracles as facts. If there be nothing, then, in the ordinary phenomena of nature, to infer a God, do these extraordinary phenomena supply him with no argument? Does a voice from heaven make no impression upon him? And we have the best evidence which history can furnish, that such a voice was uttered; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We have the evidence of a fact, for the existence of that very Being from whom the voice proceeded, and the evidence of a thousand facts, a power superior to nature; because, on the impulse of a volition, it did counteract her laws and processes, it allayed the wind, it gave sight to the blind, health to the diseased, and, at the utterance of a voice it gave life to the dead. The ostensible agent in all these wonderful proceedings are not only credentials of his power, but he gave such credentials of his honesty, as dispose our understanding to receive his explanation of them. We do not avail ourselves of any other principle than what an Atheist will acknowledge. He understands as well as we do, the natural signs of veracity, which lie in the tone, the manner, the countenance, the high moral expression of worth and benevolence, and, above all, in that firm and undaunted constancy, which neither contempt, nor poverty, nor death, could shift from any of its positions. All these claims upon our belief, were accumulated to an unexampled degree in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; and when we couple with them his undoubted miracles, and the manner in which his own personal appearance was followed up by a host of witnesses, who, after a catastrophe which would have proved a death-blow to any cause of imposture, offered themselves to the eye of the public, with the same powers, the same

evidence, and the same testimony, it seems impossible to resist his account of the invisible principle, which gave birth and movement to the whole of this wonderful transaction. Whatever Atheism we may have founded on the common phenomena around us, here is a new phenomena which demands our attention, the testimony of a man who, in addition to evidence of honesty, more varied and more satisfying than were ever offered by a brother of the species, had a voice from the clouds, and the power of working miracles, to vouch for him. We do not think, that the account which this man gives of himself can be viewed either with indifference or distrust, and the account is most satisfying. "I proceeded forth, and came from God." "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." "Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." He had elsewhere said, that God was his Father. The existence of God is there laid before us, by an evidence altogether distinct from the natural argument of the schools, and it may therefore be admitted in spite of the deficiency of that argument. From the same pure and unquestionable source we gather our information of his attributes. "God is true." "God is a spirit." He is omnipotent "for with God all things are possible." He is intelligent, "for he knoweth what things we have need of." He sees all things, and he directs all things, for "the very hairs of our head are numbered," and "a sparrow falleth not to the ground without his permission."

(To be continued.)

Biography.

LIFE OF THE REV C. F. SWARTZ, MISSIONARY TO THE
EAST-INDIES.

From "The Missionary Register."

THIS distinguished man may be justly considered as the Christian Apostle of the East in these latter times. He arrived at Madras, at the age of twenty-four, on the 17th of July, 1750, to *preach among the Gentiles of India the unsearchable riches of Christ*: and he continued in this sacred work, with unimpeached integrity, indefatigable zeal, and abundant success, till the 13th of February, 1798, when, in the calm triumph of a Christian Hero, he closed the labours of nearly half a century in the service of his Master in India; revered and regretted by Christians,

Pagans, and Mahometans ; having himself trod in the steps of his worthy predecessor Ziegenbalg and his associates, and leaving an animated example to all who have succeeded him, or may succeed him, in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to the Eastern World.

CHRISTIAN FREDERICK SWARTZ was born in Germany, in 1726, and engaged himself as a missionary to India, under the protection of the Danish Mission College. After labouring with his colleagues at Tranquebar for some years, he was directed by the College to establish himself at Tritchinapoly, under the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge." The Society had various missionary stations toward the southern part of the Indian peninsula ; and, in 1766, this new one was established at Tritchinapoly, and over it Mr. Swartz was appointed to preside.

Some passages in the prayer which he composed for the dedication of the Church at this place, May 18, 1766, well display the true spirit of a Christian Missionary.

"——Be merciful unto us, and hear our prayer, that we make before Thee in this place. As often as we from henceforth shall join here, let thy Spirit animate our hearts to seek thy face sincerely, without hypocrisy. As often as we shall hear thy word, let us do it with an unfeigned intention to obey and keep it without exception. As often as thy sacraments, which are holy means of entering with Thee into a covenant of love and obedience, are administered in this house, oh ! be pleased to make them effectual to the salvation of our souls. And finally, when strangers, who do not know thy Name, hear of all the glorious doctrines and methods of worshipping thee, preached in this house, incline, oh ! mercifully incline their hearts to renounce their abominable idolatry, and to worship thee, O God, in the name of Christ.

"In this manner make this a place where thy name is glorified, thy kingdom sought for, and thy will duly performed.

"Bless all them who have forwarded the building of this house, by kind advices or charitable contributions. Remember them in mercy, during the days of their life, and particularly at the hour of their death. Let them see, at the day of judgment, that their charity has been serviceable to the benefit of many souls.

"Frustrate all the machinations of the devil, against this house, preserve it from all dangerous accidents, and let it long be, what we from hence humbly shall call it, CHRIST'S CHURCH.

"Hear this our supplication, O Father of Mercies, for the sake of our Mediator, and to the glory of thy Name. Amen."

In this station Mr. Swartz soon found his labours so extensive, that it became necessary to employ some promising native converts as Catechists. Among these, who were eight or nine in num-

ber, Sattianaden was appointed in 1772. He was afterward admitted to Holy Orders, and has ever since laboured with great eloquence and success. His name signifies "Professor of the Truth." Before his conversion he was of the highest cast.

January 14th of this year, Mr. Swartz experienced the signal care of his Heavenly Father. The powder magazine of the fort blew up on that day, and killed and wounded many persons, both Europeans and natives. The windows of his house were shattered, and several balls flew into the rooms, but he escaped all personal injury.

His heart was much set on Tanjore. He visited that place several times in 1772, in order to strengthen the congregation, and to try, whether, by frequently preaching the word in that populous city, it might not please God to make some impression on the inhabitants. With this hope he took with him three of his Catechists, who went among the people morning and evening, laying before them the glorious truths of the Gospel, and inviting them to *the obedience of Faith*.

Mr. Swartz had several conversations with the king on the subject of religion. The king, understanding that he was explaining the doctrines of Christianity to his officers, desired to hear him himself. He had scarcely opened his lips, when the great Bramin entered. The King prostrated himself before him to the ground, and afterward stood before him with his hands folded, while the Bramin placed himself on an elevated seat. The King made signs to Mr. Swartz to enter into discourse with the Bramin; who heard all with seeming attention, but made no reply. The king asked several questions concerning repentance, and desired the Missionary to marry a couple of Christians in his palace. He readily consented, and performed the ceremony with as much solemnity as possible. They began with a hymn, after which Mr. Swartz preached, concluding with prayer and singing; all in the Malabar tongue. The king and many of the people were pleased, but the Bramins looked on it as a dangerous innovation.

In 1773, Mr. Swartz repeats his expressions of gratitude for the Divine goodness toward him and his fellow-labourers in their preservation, as an epidemical disease was then raging round them at Trichinapoly, which had swept off above a thousand persons in a fortnight.

In 1774, Mr. Swartz went to Madras, at the desire of his brethren, to procure the grant of some ground at Tanjore for the erection of a place for Divine Worship: but the Nabob declined his request. His friend Colonel Wood, dying this year, and leaving him one of his executors, this circumstance occasioned a second visit to Madras, when he renewed his application to the

Nabob, but met with another refusal, accompanied, however, with a profusion of Oriental compliments.

The Heathen were now beginning to be more inquisitive into Christianity; and this animated him much in his preaching. The awakening, however, of some Roman Catholics to a sense of the importance of religion, gave rise to a spirit of persecution which occasioned him much trouble. One of the Catechists having visited a sick relative of his own, an ignorant Papist, the sick man entreated his instruction. The Catechist explained to him the doctrines of Repentance, and of Faith in Christ: he lent a willing ear, and soon after died. The Catechist wished, as being a near relative, to attend his funeral; but, the Roman Catholics disliking this, and the Popish Catechist having given him a blow, all the rest fell on him, and beat him so unmercifully, that the very Heathen cried out against them as murderers.

Mr. Swartz found, indeed, the Jesuits to be the greatest enemies of the Mission. They discovered their enmity in stirring up the poor country people to raise disturbances. He met, about this period, with a very mortifying instance of this evil influence. In a country town there appeared a most pleasing prospect of a plentiful harvest, the greater part of the inhabitants having shewn a willingness to be instructed. In Mr. Swartz's absence, however, the Roman Catholic Priest threatened his people, and refused to baptize any children, and to marry and bury any of his congregation, unless they would enter into a covenant to obtain the removal of the Protestant Missionary and his Catechists. He told the Heathens, too, that if Mr. Swartz and his assistants gained ground, their pagodas would fall to ruin, and their feasts cease. The Catechists met, in consequence, with such ill treatment, that they were obliged to quit the place; and, as any application to the magistrates would but have increased the evil, Mr. Swartz chose rather to bear this persecution patiently, entreating God to remedy the evil in his good time.

With all ranks of Heathens this man of God was accustomed to converse freely. Multitudes would hear him explain Christianity, and would even applaud. It was no unusual thing with them to reply: "True; what can avail all our images, and our numberless ceremonies! There is but one Supreme Being, the Maker and Preserver of all!" But their convictions ended with their applause!

"In one of my journeys," says he, "I arrived at a large place where the Heathen celebrated a feast. I was struck with the excessive crowd which I saw before me. I stood at some distance from them; but was soon surrounded by a number of people, to whom I explained the glorious perfections of God, and remarked how absurd the worship of images was; and how they dishon-

oured God by all their idolatry, and enhanced their own misery. I told them at the same time, what infinite mercy God had shewn to lost sinners by sending them a Redeemer, and how they might become partakers of the benefit of redemption. All seemed pleased; acknowledging their folly, and the excellency of this Christian doctrine. Before and after noon, new crowds came near. I spoke till I was quite exhausted."

These labours were not in vain: many of the Heathen were brought to embrace the truth.

Among these converts, Mr. Swartz mentioned one in particular—a young man of the higher cast, who deliberated above three years whether he should embrace Christianity. His numerous relatives had been his great obstacle. He had, however, yielded, at length to his convictions. The Heathen shunned and reviled him; while he endured their persecution with humility, yet without dejection. His countrymen, perceiving that they could not depress his spirits, acknowledged in the end, the wrong which they had done him, and even entreated him to read to them some passages of the New-Testament.

In a village not far from Mr. Swartz's residence, a whole family had been converted. On their return home, all the village was enraged against them, refusing them a share in the most common acts of kindness, and even forbidding them to walk in the public road. As they suffered all this persecution, however, with humility, and with some degree of cheerful boldness, their Heathen neighbours became ashamed of their conduct and treated them with more humanity.

In another village also a whole family had embraced Christianity. Their son-in-law was the principal man in the village. He was incensed at the conversion of the family, and directed his father-in-law to return no more. By gentle representations, however, his rage, and that of the people, subsided; and Mr. Swartz began to entertain hopes of shortly seeing the whole place inhabited by Christians.

Mr. Swartz took unwearied pains with his Assistant Catechists. They were all employed daily in preaching the Gospel over the various parts of the country, "and trying," to use his own words, "whether they might be so happy as to bring some of their wandering fellow-creatures into the Way of Truth."

What an abode was the house of this great and good man! He daily assembled all the Catechists who were not on stations too far distant, and instructed them how to explain the truths of Christianity, and to address the natives in a mild and winning manner, overlooking the passionate and rough speeches which would sometimes be returned for their love. In the morning the Catechists joined with him in prayer, and in meditating on the word of God; after which every one was directed whither to go

that day. In the evening, they gave an account of their labours, relating the encouraging and discouraging circumstances : and the day closed, as it began, with meditation and prayer.

His ministry was, in various instances, successful among the soldiers in garrison, to whom he acted as chaplain.

Poor widows also came in for a share of the attention of this benevolent man. A sum of money having been sent to him for their benefit, he resolved to expend it in the erection of comfortable tenements, but the design was brought to a stand for want of further funds. The young Rajah of Tanjore, however, visiting that part of the country, Mr. Swartz pleaded with him in behalf of the widows ; and, succeeding in his application, completed a row of small houses for the comfortable reception of these destitute women.

Anxious to extend the sphere of his labours, he prayed earnestly for more assistance in the mission, that he might be enabled to reside some months every year at Tanjore ; and, if it should be found expedient, establish himself there.

His exertions were not confined to the instruction and conversion of the adult Natives and Europeans ; but, with equal zeal and fidelity, he laboured for the salvation of the Europeans, both civil and military, who resided at any time within reach of his Christian charity. He opened English and Malabar schools in various places, and was affectionate and unwearied in his attention to children.

Of this part of his character, the following letter, the original of which was communicated to us by the Rev. Basil Wood, is an interesting illustration. It was written to the children of Colonel Wood, then left fatherless ; they were from six to eleven years of age.

“ To the dear Children —————

“ Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

DEAR CHILDREN ;

“ As the time is very near when you, as I suppose, will leave this country, I thought it my duty to write you a short exhortation, which you are so willing to receive from me, your old friend.

“ When you leave this country, I beseech you, take none of the sins which are so manifest here with you. Beg of your Redeemer to forgive you all sins, and to grant you the help of his Holy Spirit, to love, fear, honour and obey God. Learn the will of God, and practise it daily, as you have given us some pleasing ground for hope. As your age is not easily given to grief, make use of your innocent cheerfulness to gladden the

heart of your Mamma. You cannot please her better than by obedience, and willingness to learn to pray, and to fear God. Endeavour to please her and your Heavenly Father by all this. Read every day your beloved Bible: pray heartily, and forget not to sing a song of praise to your Redeemer. Whenever your Dear Mamma forbids you a thing, be ready to obey: never give way to any stubbornness; and, as you know that God is highly pleased with humility, learn to be so; entreating your Saviour to destroy all the seed of pride, and to clothe you with humility. May the blessing of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be with you. Amen.

“Remember me, and pray for me, that I may walk worthy of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that, by my poor Ministry, many souls may truly be converted to him.

“I remain sincerely, dear Children and my young Friends,

“Your affectionate Friend, and humble Servant,

“*Trichinapoly,*
January 16, 1775.

CHRISTIAN FREDERICK SWARTZ.”

He was joined in the work of the Mission, in 1777, by the Rev. Christian Pohlé, whom the Danish Missionaries at Tranquebar sent to his assistance;—a man of piety, zeal, and talents: who continues to fulfil to this day, in the service of the “Society for promoting Christian Knowledge,” as the successor of his venerable friend, the expectations which Mr. Swartz had formed of him. He soon made himself master, by diligent application, of the English and Malabar languages, sufficiently to minister with acceptance in both tongues, and took a very active part in assisting Mr. Swartz in the whole business of the ministry and the schools.

June the 16th of this year, the Rev. J. J. Schoelkopf arrived at Madras, being sent out by the Society to assist Mr. Swartz. It pleased God, however, to remove him before he could enter on his labours. He was, almost immediately on his landing, seized with a bloody flux, and died at Madras on the 11th of July. “My grief,” says Mr. Swartz, “was great; but, well, knowing that all the ways of a holy God are good, I resigned my will to his wise providence. He is the Lord of his Church. May He have mercy upon us, and send faithful labourers into his vineyard!”

Mr. Swartz writes in 1779, that among the Heathen, at his two stations at Trichinapoly and Tanjore, are many thousands even amongst Bramins, who confess that their idolatry is a vain and sinful thing, and that nothing but fear keeps them at present from embracing the Christian Religion. It is to be hoped this conviction will embolden them one day or another to shake off that inglorious servitude of sin and Satan. He says that there

hardly passeth a day in which Bramins do not visit his house at Tanjore; that they hear attentively what is said to them; that they frequently take up a book, in which the doctrine of the Christian Religion is explained, and that they praise that doctrine as a Divine one.

A Bramin being asked what he would now resolve upon, whether he purposed to stifle all conviction, or whether he intended to receive that Divine doctrine and to profess it, replied, that he could not deny the conviction which he had received, and accordingly had sounded some of his acquaintance; but that they all insisted upon the task as too difficult and dangerous, on account of the great numbers of the professors of idolatry.

“For my part (says Mr. Swartz) I entertain a cheerful hope of seeing better days, and therefore rejoice in the present opportunity of preaching the salutary doctrine of Christ, frequently calling to my mind that there is a time of sowing preceding that of reaping. At Trichinapoly, we begin and end the day with public prayer. At Tanjore I have introduced the same custom. Very often Bramins and other Heathens have been present, observing our reading the word of God, our singing and praying. I never discourage the Heathen from being present at any of our solemn acts of worship.”

In 1779, the garrison at Tanjore being numerous, Mr. Swartz addressed a letter to the Governor and council at Madras, and obtained immediately their public sanction and contributions to the erection of a Church, in which Divine Service might be performed in a proper and becoming manner. The first stone of this edifice was laid by general Munro. The funds failing, Mr. Swartz addressed the Honourable Board at Madras for further aid. He was desired in reply to come with all possible speed to Madras. The object of this summons will be best explained in his own simple and impressive narration.

“At my arrival, Governor Rumbold told me that my request should be granted: the other gentlemen assured me of the same. Here I was acquainted with the purpose for which I was called before the Presidency. The Governor told me, that they wished to preserve peace with Hyder Ally; but, as he entertained some mistaken notions, and evil persons endeavoured to confirm him in those bad ideas, the Honourable Board desired I would take a journey to Seringapatam in a private manner, and undeceive him by a fair declaration of their pacific sentiments; particularly as I, from my knowledge of the Morish language, could converse with him without the help of an interpreter. The novelty of the proposal surprised me at first; for which reason I begged some time to consider it. At last I accepted of the offer, because by doing so, I hoped to prevent evil, and to promote the welfare of the country. I thought also that I could thereby give some

small proof of the gratitude which I owe to the Honourable Board for many favours, which they have bestowed on me during my residence at Trichinapoly. Besides, I saw that I should have an opportunity of conversing with many people about the things of God, who perhaps never had heard a word concerning God and a Redeemer.

(To be continued.)

Scripture Illustrated.

AN EXTRACT FROM DR. DELANY'S LIFE OF DAVID, CONCERNING
SAUL'S CONSULTING THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

WHEN Saul saw their numbers, (those of his enemies,) their order, and their appointments, he judged himself greatly overpowered, and fell into great terror upon the prospect. What should he do? Samuel was dead, and Abiathar was with David. He had for some years past, shewn no regard, or, to speak more justly, shewn all imaginable disregard to religion. His pride had lifted him up above his duty; he had said in his heart, "There is no God:" but now his fears got the better of his infidelity. He then, too late, had recourse to God for aid. He had massacred the priests of God at Nob, all but one; and that one was gone away to David with the ephod. He applied himself to some other priest. And since he consulted God by Urim, it is evident that he had also gotten another ephod made, not considering the peculiar sanctity of the first, or that God would confine his manifestations to that which was of his own appointment. At least, Saul had no reason to hope, that God should exhibit himself in any extraordinary manner in his favour. Samuel was dead, and Gad was with David; and we hear of no other, on whom the Spirit of God rested in those days. However, he applied himself to some of the prophetic colleges, probably to some of the most eminent of those sons of the prophets he had seen at Ramah; but to no purpose: God refused to answer him, either by Urim, by prophets, or by dreams.

What should he do? The heart of man is fond of prying into futurity, and more especially upon the edge of great events. In great dangers, men are desirous even to know the worst; it is some consolation to be prepared for it. He had long since renounced every thing that was serious in religion. However he had been threatened as from God; and in all probability, the time was now come, when the sentence, so long since pronoun-

ced upon him, was to be executed : could he but see Samuel, he should know all. It was said, there were men who had power over spirits. Who knows how far that power might extend ! God had forsaken him ; he could be no worse on that side ; he might be better on some other : he resolved to try.

Infidelity is nearly allied to superstition. The most infidel man I ever conversed with, was, by the accounts of those who best knew him, the most superstitious.

Saul had prayed to God to no purpose ; he now resolved to apply himself to Samuel ; and I think it evident from the text, that he actually prayed to him, but had yet no answer. What will not fear and folly drive us to ! But a few hours before, he, who was too haughty to profess himself a servant of the living God, is now the slave of his own fears and follies !

Saul had, in the days of his devotion, partly cut off, and partly frightened away those wizards and sorcerers, those execrable wretches, the pests of society, and enemies of true religion, whom God commanded to be extirpated. However, some of them might have remained, or returned ; he inquired, and was informed of a Pythoness, that dwelt not far off, at Endor. His anxiety would let him think of nothing else ; he could neither eat nor drink, until it was done. To Endor he hies that very night, stript of his regal apparel, and disguised as well as he could, and attended only by two companions. When he arrived, he prayed the woman to divine to him by her familiar spirit, and to bring him up whom he should name to her. She answered, That he knew very well, Saul had cut off all those of that profession, and why should he go about to lay such a snare for her, to have her destroyed ? He replied, That no evil should happen to her upon that account. She then demanded, whom he would have raised ? He answered, Samuel. And the instant he pronounced his name, the woman saw Samuel, and shrieked out aloud, in terror and surprise ; and soon after asked the king, why he had deceived her, for he was Saul ? She saw an apparition she did not expect ; she knew the prophet ; she knew the veneration Saul had for him ; she knew that the prophets were only sent to kings ; and she knew the poor deluded mortals she had to do with, had no notion of having any commerce with persons of sacred character ; and she knew her art, whatever that was, had never exhibited a person of that figure to her.

When the king heard her cry out in such terror, he bade her not be afraid, and asked her what she saw : She saw gods (or, as the word may be translated, lords) ascending out of the earth. Saul then inquired after his form ; and she told him, it was that of an old man covered with a mantle. The text then immediately adds, "Saul perceived it was Samuel himself, and stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself."

The narration is short, and uncircumstantial; but, as I humbly apprehend, the matter was thus:—

Saul, to prevent all delusion, would not tell the Pythoness whom he would have raised, until he brought her to the very cell, or place of her incantations; and then he told her, he would have Samuel called up to him. And the instant he said this, she, looking into her cell, saw Samuel, and seeing him so unexpectedly, and without the aid of her art, she was affrighted, and cried out; and the king, upon inquiry, hearing that it was an old man with a mantle, believed it was Samuel she saw; and straightway going to the cell, and perceiving the prophet, did him obeisance. Immediately Samuel asked him, why he had disquieted him, to bring him up? (will not this ground a presumption, that the Pythoness had not disturbed him by her incantations? for if she had, the question had been more naturally directed to her.) To which Saul answered, that he was sore distressed; for the Philistines warred against him, and God had forsaken him, and would neither answer him by dreams nor prophets. “Therefore, (says he,) I have called unto thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.”

Then said Samuel, “Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done for himself, as he spake by me; for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even unto David; because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek: therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day.”

In this we see the Prophet foretells that Saul should that day be stript of the kingdom; and that the kingdom should be divided, and given to David. Then follows what nothing but infinite and unerring prescience could predict; an exact, minute, precise account of all the circumstances of the then depending event: “Moreover, the Lord will also deliver Israel, with thee, unto the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me; and also the camp of Israel shall the Lord deliver into the hands of the Philistines.”

I own I am astonished at the inattention, (shall I call it?) or impiety, or both, of those critics and commentators, who could ascribe this prediction to the sagacity of an impostor, or even to the devil. I shall take a proper time to refute them; and, in the mean time, go on with my history.

When Saul heard this dreadful sentence pronounced upon himself, his family, and his people, the terror of it struck him to the heart, and he hastened to get away from that fatal place; but as he went, his fears operated upon a mind weakened with guilt, and upon a body exhausted with fatigue and fasting; he

lost all power of motion, and fell at his full length upon the floor. The woman seeing this, ran up to him, and finding the distressed and weak condition he was in, endeavoured to persuade him, as well as she could, to take some sustenance, which he absolutely refused. Then calling his servants to her aid, they all, in a manner, compelled him to consent: "So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed. And the woman had a fat calf in the house, and she hasted and killed it; and took flour and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof, and she brought it before Saul, and before his servants, and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night."

What remorse, what despair, what desolation of mind, what horrors of guilt, what terrors and anticipations of divine vengeance, haunted him by the way, may no reader of this history ever learn from his own experience!

But it is urged, that an impostor might easily know what passed between Samuel and Saul in relation to Amalek; an impostor might know that the Philistines were much stronger, and therefore would conquer; and that Saul and his sons would rather die than flee or yield.

Suppose this—suppose such wretched creatures as these: suppose the wisest of the fallen angels exactly acquainted with the conversation, with the very style and phraseology which passed between Samuel and Saul in relation to Amalek, and passed, for ought appears, betwixt those two only; suppose them to know (what hath no foundation in the text) that the Philistines were now much stronger, more numerous, as well as in much better heart, than the Israelites; did it follow, that the Philistines must conquer and kill all before them? Have greater and stronger armies always conquered from the foundation of the world? Or hath the matter of fact, generally speaking, run quite otherwise? Were not the Philistines yet stronger and more numerous some years before? and the Israelites, beyond all comparison, less numerous, and more affrighted, hiding themselves in woods, and rocks, and caves, and reduced at last to six hundred men, without one spear or sword among them all? And did the Philistines conquer for these reasons? Quite otherwise.—See 1 Sam. xiii. 14.

I will go one step farther: Suppose the subtlest spirit in hell to know that God had forsaken Saul; and suppose him to know, from the experience of ages, that they are doomed to sure destruction, whom God hath forsaken; could he foresee, for that reason, the time of his destruction? No, the times and the seasons are solely in the hand of God.

In the time of the battle, just now mentioned, Saul had greatly offended God. Samuel had just then denounced the divine vengeance and deposition upon him for it; and yet Saul, not

contented to prophane the altar with impious and unhallowed hands, had the hardiness, knowing himself under the divine displeasure, to call for the ephod, to consult God; and after all this rushed into battle, without waiting for an answer. Then surely, if ever, might human or satanick wisdom have pronounced his fate, as far as impiety, as far as provoking, and being deserted by God, deserved it; and that signal inferiority of his forces foretold it. And yet had Satan so pronounced, the event had shewn him to be as strangely deceived. What he could not pronounce then, could he, and would he dare to pronounce now? And if he could not, could any thing inferior? Could a poor groveling impostor pronounce it, upon the foot of much less probability? infinitely less knowledge, and greater hazard?

But an evil spirit, or even an impostor, might know that Saul and his sons were determined either to die or to conquer in the battle.

Let this also be allowed, without any foundation in the text: Hath not many a man been determined to die, and yet been prevented? But the truth is otherwise: Neither Saul nor his sons were determined to die; they all fled from the enemy as fast and as far as they could. The enemy first overtook the sons of Saul, and slew them; and when Saul could flee no farther, rather than fall into the enemies' hands, who were at his heels, he killed himself.

Besides all this, shall we so far outrage our reason and our religion, as to believe any being but God capable of seeing into futurity, and pronouncing upon it? If there be any that think so, let me call upon them, with Isaiah, "to bring forth their strong reasons. Let them bring forth and shew us what shall happen; let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider (or set our hearts upon) them, or declare to us things for to come." In one word, the assertions and reasonings on the other side seem to be grounded upon great mistakes, and fruitful of grievous absurdities. I cannot assent to them; I envy no man that can.

The consequence from all this is clear: If that person who now denounced the divine vengeance upon Saul, under the semblance of *Samuel*, was neither an impostor, nor an evil spirit, he must be, what the Scriptures constantly call him throughout this narration, *Samuel*.

That spirits of another world may carry about them such vehicles as may admit them to a sensible commerce with us, in like manner as our spirits bear about these bodies of ours, the best philosophy will admit. And that they have done so, the most authentic histories in the world will attest. If then God Almighty thought fit either to appoint or permit Samuel to appear to Saul on this occasion, I see no more difficulty in it than in his

appearing to him on any other occasion whilst he was in this world, and in full health and strength. For Saul no more saw his spirit then than he did now ; and his spirit was as well able to bear a body about with it now as it was then.

The only question then is, Why God should appoint, or permit Samuel to appear on this occasion ? And this is a question which no man living hath a right to ask, and be informed in.—Such questions as these are the very source and fountain-head of all infidelity.—“I don’t know why things should be done so and so, and therefore I will not believe they were done.”—And what is this, but saying in other words, that you are as wise as God, and as good a judge of fit and just, at least with regard to things of this world, as he can be ? And therefore it is ridiculous to suppose that he transacted any thing in the affairs of this world which you cannot discover to be wise, and fit, and just. Can any thing in nature be more extravagant than such surmises as these ?



The Attributes of God Displayed.

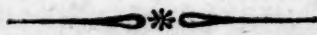


DIVERSITY OF FEATURES IN THE HUMAN FACE.

It is a very evident proof of the adorable wisdom of God, that although the bodies of men are so conformed to each other in their essential parts, yet there is so great a difference in their external appearance, that they may be easily and infallibly distinguished. Among so many millions of men, there are no two perfectly alike. Each has something peculiar which distinguishes him from all others, either in his face, voice, or manner of speaking. The variety in faces is the more astonishing, because the parts which compose the human face are few in number, and are disposed in every person according to the same plan. If all things had been produced by blind chance, the faces of men must as nearly resemble each other as eggs laid by the same bird ; balls cast in the same mould ; or drops of water out of the same bucket. But, as this is not the case, we must admire the infinite wisdom of the Creator, which in diversifying the features of the face in so admirable a manner, has evidently had the happiness of man in view. For, if they resembled each other perfectly, so that they could not be distinguished from each, it would occasion an infinity of inconveniences, mistakes, and deceptions in society. No man could ever be sure of his life, nor of the peaceable possession of his property.—

Thieves and cut-throats would run no risk of being discovered, if they could not be known again by the features of their face, nor by the sound of their voice. Adultery, theft, and other crimes would go unpunished, because the guilty could scarcely ever be discerned. We should be every moment exposed to the malice of wicked and envious men: and we could not guard against an infinity of mistakes, frauds, and misdemeanors. And what uncertainty would there be in judiciary proceedings, in sales, transfers, bargains, and contracts? What confusion in commerce! What frauds and bribery in respect to witnesses! Finally, the uniformity and perfect similitude of faces, would deprive human society of a great part of its charms, and considerably diminish the pleasure which men find in conversing with each other.

The variety of features constitutes a part of the plan of the divine government: and is a striking proof of the tender care of God towards us: for it is manifest, that not only the general structure of the body, but also the disposition of its particular parts have been executed with the greatest wisdom. Every where we behold *variety*, connected with *uniformity*: whence result the order, proportions, and beauty of the human body. Let all who consider this subject, admire the wise arrangements of the great Creator!



The Grace of God Manifested.



MEMOIR OF MRS. PENELOPE GOULDING COKE, BY HER HUSBAND,
REV. THOMAS COKE, LL. D.

(Continued from page 30.)

NOR was her patience inferior to her humility. "Often," says a friend, whose letter has been already quoted, "often have I beheld the provocations she has had to anger; but, through divine grace, looking to her blessed Lord, she remained unmoved, and presented to all, such a pattern of humility and patience as I never before beheld." As she was naturally of a haughty and imperious spirit, nothing could more clearly demonstrate the change which had taken place in her heart, than the striking contrast which she exhibited on these occasions. To a person who had never known her, prior to her conversion, it would almost appear, that meekness and placidity of temper were, with her, constitutional virtues. For such was the effect of divine

grace upon her heart, that scarcely a single trace remained of her natural disposition. "Her patience," says a friend, "was proof against the highest insults from the most contemptible persons, whether strangers or domestics." When, on certain occasions, her religious friends have paid her visits, her casual domestics have behaved sometimes with the most astonishing rudeness and assurance; and there have been instances in which they have abandoned their duty, and, in spite of every remonstrance, left her to fill their places. And when this improper conduct has been observed and censured by others, her constant reply was, "My God bore much longer with me." To bear such indignities from servants, without noting their conduct with pointed marks of decided disapprobation, would certainly have been censurable in her, had she not been actuated in this by a more noble motive than mere passive unconcern. When, on private occasions, some of her most confidential friends have hinted at the subject, her reply was, "These servants always shewed great kindness, and manifested a strong attachment to my dear father, and this draws a mantle over all their present failings."

An habitual acquaintance with the miseries of others, tends too often to stifle the humane dictates of our nature, and to blunt, if not extinguish, compassion in the human breast. But personal afflictions too frequently operate in the same way with still greater power, and more especially so with regard to bodily pains. An acquaintance with the latter can only be obtained through the medium of experience; and, in proportion to their acuteness, they often render the sufferer morose and impatient. These simple propositions result from the general dictates of our fallen nature. If, therefore, these causes operate without producing their natural effects, they afford an invincible proof that some new, some amiable principle is at work, to counteract their legitimate efficacy. Of this truth, the dear subject of these memoirs presents us with a splendid instance. She had long been familiarized to scenes of distress, both among strangers and her nearest friends; and, almost through life, had been a subject of complicated bodily afflictions; but in neither case did she act in concert with the general mass of mankind, when placed in similar situations. The miseries of others not only excited her compassionate feelings, but gave them new energies in proportion to their aggravation and number. Their continuance, instead of blunting the soft emotions of her heart, seemed to give new vigour to her humanity, and to urge the adoption of new measures for the relief of those who languished. Among her dearest relatives, the same principle operated in all its force. An increase of malady only displayed the unabating fervour of her affection, and imparted a new lustre to a virtue which no ca-

lamity could diminish. At the same time, though her personal sufferings were great, no murmurs were known to escape her. She considered these afflictions as coming from the hand of God, as being sent in much mercy, though now appearing in disguise; and as being, above all things, best calculated to work out for her a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. To what then can we attribute this glorious deviation from the common track, but to that grace which can alone transform the soul, and make the believer a new creature in Christ Jesus!

Such was the general character of this amiable Christian, prior to my acquaintance with her. It has been drawn from the documents and testimonies of persons of integrity, many of whom have spoken from their own knowledge, and others from the most authentic information, which they have derived from such as were intimately acquainted with her.* In such parts as remain, I shall speak from my own personal knowledge, and shall find occasion in the relation of simple facts to corroborate the truth of the preceding accounts.

Through a train of providential circumstances, which can excite no interest in the reader, and which have little or no connection with the memoirs of her life, I was brought acquainted with this excellent woman. A congeniality of soul, subsisting between us to promote the glory of God to the utmost of our power, and also in many other respects, (if I may presume so to speak,) inclined us to a matrimonial union; and the solemnities of our mutual engagements were celebrated in the month of April, 1805. Immediately on our marriage, we hastened to carry into effect a resolution which we had previously formed. This was to quit the habitation of her early years, in which she had been partially secluded from society, and almost wholly from the world, to enter on a more extensive field of action, in which she might be more useful in her day and generation.—The scene which presented itself, when she came to take her final leave of her religious friends, with whom she had taken sweet counsel for a number of years, was truly affecting. Prayers for her welfare, and tears at the thoughts of being separated from her, were mingled together in all the varieties which the conflicting passions could exhibit. The aged and infirm, who laboured under the joint pressure of poverty and affliction, and who had found relief from her bounty, followed her with the blessings of gratitude for past favours, and with tears which, perhaps, might partly arise from the apprehension that their future wants would find no benefactor. To dissipate these fears

* I am much obliged to the Rev. Mr. Dermott, for his kind exertions in collecting, at Bradford, all the information in his power on this (to me) most interesting subject.

we soon afterwards assured them that death alone should make an alteration in her list of pensioners. In this she invariably kept her word; and whoever may hereafter write a memoir of her husband, when he has joined her in glory, will be able to tell how he has acted since her removal to a world of spirits.

Removing from a stationary, to an itinerant mode of life, it was utterly impossible that she should search out those haunts of misery which she had been accustomed to visit, in order to relieve the unhappy sufferers. But this by no means contracted her liberality, or rendered her less beneficial to society. The delicacy of her constitution, preventing her from frequently visiting such as wanted her spiritual assistance, compelled her to enlarge the variety, and increase the number of such tracts as she had been in the habit of distributing. These she kept by her on all occasions; and no opportunity which presented itself of giving them an extensive circulation, was suffered to pass away unimproved. Having nothing in view but the glory of God, in these endeavours to snatch souls from death, her faith in the good effects which she anticipated, was exceedingly strong. And so deeply was her mind impressed with the value of immortal spirits, as to draw from her such expressions as these: "If I might be the means of saving but one single soul, it would be well worth the labour of my life." "And if" (addressing herself to me with her usual vivacity, when adverting to my ministerial labours,) "it should appear at the last day, that I had been instrumental in saving as many souls as you, how greatly would you be surprised!"

Nor was her faith or labour on these occasions spent in vain. I can clearly recollect several specific instances of the good which has been wrought by the pamphlets which she distributed. I know the places in which many of those happy souls reside, who have been blessed through her instrumentality. And as the same tracts are still in existence, it surely is not unreasonable to hope, that hereafter they will be read by others who will also derive benefit from the perusal of them. These facts, of which I have been an eye-witness, have made such an impression on my mind, that I feel it to be an imperious duty to follow her example by imitating her conduct. Hereafter, when the memoirs of her life shall be accompanied with an account of her experience, which will be drawn from her own journals, and published as a distinct work, I have no doubt, that though dead she will continue to speak; and will ultimately prove a greater blessing by her bright example and religious character, than she was rendered during her life, though spent in acts of benevolence and zeal for the glory of God.

(To be continued.)

To the Editors of the Methodist Magazine.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The following account shews the long suffering of God, and the truth of that declaration, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God;" for it may truly be said of the subject of this account, that he was 'a sinner saved by grace.' I am no advocate for sick bed repentance, when the fear of death seems to be the only cause of sorrow for past offences; for, with respect to such in general, it may be said they are "like the morning cloud, and early dew:" neither do I suppose that all who manifest a willingness to die, when brought to the awful verge of 'vast eternity,' are prepared for a judgment day—Nay, I believe many will then be found at the left hand, whose surviving friends have hoped it was *well* with them—But we have an example in scripture of *one* who having a just view of the character of the Son of God, manifested a confidence in him, and prayed, "Lord remember me;" and at once received an answer which gave peace to the soul—although it might be said it was the *twelfth* hour with him—so with respect to T. G. he was convinced *rationally* that he was a sinner, and cast himself upon the sinner's friend, who he proved could save to the uttermost. He manifested the soundness of his conversion by patience under suffering, and unshaken confidence in God.—Perhaps this account may come to the notice of some of his friends in Europe, who may rejoice to hear that from America he has gone to the land of everlasting rest.

WILLIAM M. STILWELL.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THOMAS GARSIDE.

An honest Deist, where the Gospel shines,
Matured to nobler, in the Christian ends.

THOMAS GARSIDE, was born near Manchester, England, of poor parents. His mother was a member of the Methodist Society. Thomas was hopefully converted when he was between seven and eight years of age. He was thought to be a child of uncommon parts, his experience was bright, and his conception of divine things exceedingly clear for one of his age. When about eight years of age he was introduced to the notice of Mr. J. Wesley, and other preachers, during dinner, who were highly delighted with his conversation. But alas! the early blossoms, which promised much future usefulness, were soon blasted.—Shortly after this time his mother died: on her death bed she called all her children to her, and gave them severally a charge, and a blessing. To Thomas she said, 'I have no fear for thee,

I think thou wilt do well.' After his Mother's death, his Father put all his children out, and it was Thomas' lot to live with an uncle who was an utter enemy to all godliness. He at first endeavoured to reason Tom out of his piety, but, young as he was, he had an answer to all his reasons. His uncle then tried severity; but Tom bore it patiently, counting it joy to suffer for Christ's sake. His uncle then assailed him with ridicule and flattery, and these were but too successful; for by degrees Tom grew ashamed of the form of godliness, and of course lost the power from his heart.

During his minority he was kept very diligently at work, and his education was much neglected. At an early age he entered into the army, and continued therein a number of years; and although never promoted out of the ranks, he kept himself from those excesses into which soldiers generally run. Instead of spending his leisure time in drinking, gaming, and other vain and wicked amusements, he used to employ it in reading books which he borrowed; and although the Bible, or religious books, were not among the number which he frequently perused, yet his reading tended greatly to inform his mind, and furnish him with a stock of miscellaneous information. He was naturally of a sober, thoughtful turn of mind, which, together with his reading, and tolerably moral behaviour, induced his fellow soldiers to look on him as an eccentric man. Although he escaped the contagious example of his fellow soldiers, he did not escape the contagion of infidelity, which was propagated at that time with great zeal. He imbibed many of the opinions of Payne, Voltaire &c; yet it always pained him to hear Christianity made a subject for the drunkard's song, and profane jest. He seemed to have an instinctive reverence of God (if I may be allowed the expression) that caused pain at heart whenever any thing was spoken that shewed a want of reverence to the Deity. After getting clear from the army, he returned to Manchester, where he soon married; but his marriage proved an unhappy one. One day after a severe quarrel between him and his wife, he went and listed again; but he was soon sorry for what he had done, and determined to desert. Accordingly he and his wife secretly went to Scotland, under a feigned name, and they got employment in Glasgow. He had not been here many months, before there came a man from England who knew him. This man was a drunken abandoned wretch, and knowing Garside durst not disoblige him, for fear of being informed of as a deserter; he used to extort money from him under the name of loans. In order to avoid this evil, Thomas resolved to flee to America. He landed at New-York in the fall of the year 1810, with his wife and one child, and was soon engaged to go up the North River and work in the factory of Messrs. Jenkins in the

city of Hudson. Here he was very diligent in his business, while able to attend to it, and had the confidence and esteem of his employers; and being a prudent man, he began to flatter himself with the prospect of doing well in the world; but his worldly prospects were soon obscured. The winter after his arrival, while absent from his family a few weeks, he slept in a newly plastered room, where the clothes of his bed were so damp that he said the sheet often adhered to his skin. Here he laid the foundation of a consumption, which gradually increased upon him, till it put a period to his mortal life on the 3d day of November, 1812, at three o'clock in the morning. In the fall of the year 1811, I frequently interchanged a few words with him as I passed through the yard of the factory in which he was often busy with his yarn. One evening he invited me to drink tea with him—in the course of our conversation I introduced the subject of religion, when he gave me to understand that he had not very favourable opinions of several of the bible characters, and instanced Moses. When I reasoned with him on the subject, I found he had taken up his objection from hearsay, and was far from being perfectly acquainted with all the circumstances from which he ought to have inferred the character of Moses. In the summer of 1812, he raised much blood; and in August he was unable any longer to attend to his business. It was in August he sent for me one Sunday to come and see him. After divine service in the afternoon I went, accompanied by Brother S. He said, "the nature of my disease is such that I cannot expect to live long—I cannot say that I fear death—I confess I have committed actions that were not right—and I have run into many errors.—Although I believe God is infinitely pure and holy—yet I think he deals with creatures as a tender Father, making allowance for their ignorance and imperfections.—We are all liable to err and my way may be wrong, therefore I have sent for you, not to *dispute*, but to *inquire after truth*. You profess to believe the bible, and I believe you are sincere in your profession—there are many things in the bible which I do not believe—but I *think* I am willing to be better informed—if the bible be *true*, I am not fit to die. If you are able to convince me of its truth, I wish you to do so." We told him we thought his creed was more defective than erroneous—that we agreed with him in believing that God is infinitely pure and holy—that his goodness prompts him to deal with his creatures as a tender Father—that he makes due allowances for the ignorance and imperfections of men—that we thought he overlooked the *justice* of God which requires satisfaction for the sins of free agents. We told him that if he would state his particular objections to any part of the bible, we would endeavour to answer them as we were able.

He said, "I think the account of the fall of man in Genesis represents the conduct of God quite unworthy of him. It seems to me inconsistent with his *goodness* to inflict so severe a punishment for so slight an offence as the eating of a little fruit." We asked what he thought of the present state of mankind, and the world? Whether he thought men were sinful or not? He thought a moment, and then answered, "I have been a number of years in the army, and perhaps have seen human nature in its worst light—I have seen more wickedness in one year than you are like to see in all your lives—I confess man is sinful." We asked him if he could reconcile the present state of man with the goodness and purity of God? observing, that to us it appeared there could be but two ways of accounting for the depravity, sinfulness, and misery of man—he is either a fallen creature, or God made him as he is. If the latter be true, God is the author of all the sin and misery in the world. He hastily replied—"I can never think that God is the author of sin"—We then endeavoured to explain to him at large, the nature of man in his innocence—the nature of his fall—and that the present state of man was reconcileable to the goodness, purity, &c. of God, when viewed in connection with the complete plan of deliverance from it, which he had provided through Jesus Christ; and that it was reconcileable in no other view whatever. Our time not permitting farther discourse, we prayed with him, and left him. In a few days I visited him again, when he said the impossibility of reconciling the present state of man with his views of the character of God without the supposition of a fall, had considerably shaken his sceptical foundation. After a little conversation I put into his hands, "*Fletcher's appeal to matter of fact and common sense.*" The next time I saw him he said with tears in his eyes, "This book has removed all my doubts, and I see I am a sinner, a great sinner." From this time a sense of his sinfulness, and need of a Saviour increased fast upon him—"I have been trying to enumerate my sins," said he one day, "but alas! my transgressions are more than I can recount—and then there are my sins of *omission too*"—here penitential sighs and tears stopped his utterance. Shortly after he cried out in a broken manner—"O! I have denied my Saviour!"—and then like Peter he wept bitterly. He was now engaged in prayer, night and day, during his waking hours; and on Sunday, four weeks from our first conversation, when he first sent for me, he found peace and joy in believing; God testifying in his heart that his sins were forgiven for Christ's sake. Now he was exceeding happy in the midst of his bodily afflictions. While coughing up blood by mouthfuls, he said, "I can thank God for all his mercies; and say thy will be done—death has no sting—by faith I see the promised land, and rejoice in the prospect and hope of shortly being there."

Calling in one day I found him somewhat dejected. He said he had waked in the night and found himself repeating aloud part of an old song that he used to sing, and reflecting on the circumstance he thought he was not so holy as he ought to be; and it grieved him to think that his imaginations should be occupied with such things. From this time he seemed to be filled with holy zeal against every unholy thought and temper, and prayed earnestly for the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; and a few days before he died he obtained the full answer to his prayers. About two weeks before he died the enemy was suffered to tempt him sorely; but in the midst of his darkest hours he said, "I have not lost my confidence in God—he will yet bring me off more than conqueror—he will yet satisfy me with his loving kindness." Four days before he died he said, "my troubles and temptations are all gone—God is near, and I have great peace; but not that great joy which I have sometimes had." The evening before he died I was with him a short time. He was so weak that he could scarcely speak; but held me by the hand all the time I was by his bedside; "God, said he, is good—he is present with me—in God is all I want—then let this body fail; but continue thou to be present with me." As he drew near death, he was somewhat deranged; but what little he spoke was prayer and praise, till his spirit left its earthly tabernacle. 'Surely this is a brand plucked out of the burning.'

J. F.—

ACCOUNT OF THE CONVERSION OF SEVERAL CRIMINALS WHILE
CONFINED IN PRISON, AT ROME, ONEIDA COUNTY, NEW-YORK.

At a court in this county six men were convicted, and sentenced to undergo hard labour and confinement in State-Prison. After their trial they were committed to jail, in Rome village, and during their confinement in that place, they perpetrated the awful deed of putting fire to the prison; but providentially it was discovered and extinguished before its ravages had progressed far: however, the unfortunate criminals suffered considerably in consequence of the smoke, which completely filled their apartment; and upon opening the prison doors it appeared that some of the prisoners were so suffocated that they were almost devoid of the signs of life; but, by being brought to the air they all revived, except one, who was too far gone ever to be recalled to life again, till the great judgment. The surviving criminals were again brought to trial, and for the crime of setting fire to the jail, were all sentenced to be hung. Feb. 15th, 1817, was the day appointed for their execution.

A deep felt concern prevailed among the brethren for these poor criminals. The itinerant preachers who travelled through that part availed themselves of every opportunity to visit them,

for the purpose of imparting religious instruction to, and praying for them: and it was soon made manifest that their labour was not in vain; the solemn confessions, ardent prayers and flowing tears of some of them, clearly demonstrated that the God of salvation had entered the gloomy dungeon, and was about to bring these prisoners out of their spiritual prison-house.

A short time previous to the awful doom of those unhappy victims of justice, the village of Rome had been favoured with the out-pourings of the Spirit of grace; and a number of pious youth, who had become members of our church, were among the happy fruits of that reformation. Their pious concern extended to those miserable objects of human commiseration, lying immersed in two-fold darkness, but a little distance from them. The jailor, being a man of an accommodating disposition, gratified the wishes of these young brethren, who often visited the dreary abodes of the criminals, and sometimes staid all night with them, reading the scriptures and praying for them. They had not continued their zealous efforts long, before they had the happiness of joining in triumphant songs of praise, on account of pardoning grace, which some of them had experienced, to the unspeakable joy of all who felt a concern for their souls.

Harris, was one of the first among them who experienced the blessing of divine favour, and he possessed a greater gift of utterance, and more confidence than either of the others; consequently he became their chief speaker when conversation was introduced among them, and went forward in morning and evening prayer, which they attended with much solemnity, and in a vocal manner. Curiosity led many people who were occasionally there, to wait at the prison door to hear them while in their devotions. The voice of supplication uttered by beings under the sentence of an ignominious death, and issuing from the gloomy dungeon, gave to prayer an impressive power, and more than ordinary solemn tone; which was too affecting to be heard without weeping.

At length they all professed to be made spiritually alive by the blood of Christ; and those who were best acquainted with them were fully convinced of their sincerity, and the genuineness of their conversion. Real Christians, who could converse on free salvation, and a heart work, were the only persons they desired should visit them; and religion was the only topic they wished to converse upon. They spent most of their time in reading, praying, and singing: they learned a number of tunes and hymns, which they often sung with so much zeal, that the walls of the prison rang with their joyful notes.

They were permitted to attend divine worship in the courtroom, on several sabbath days; where, before the listening multitude, they related the dealings of God to their souls; and agree-

ably to their request, one of our preachers admitted them to the sacred ordinance of baptism. After they were taken from their place of confinement, and disburdened of their irons, they were conveyed to a small river not far off, and solemnly immersed in its waves, in the name of the holy Trinity, to whose expanded arms of benevolence they had fled for refuge.

The appointed time for their execution was drawing near, which very sensibly affected my mind; and being called to Rome at that time to attend a quarterly meeting, I was resolved to improve that opportunity and visit the prisoners. The sheriff, prior to this time, had prohibited them from being brought into the congregation any more, till the day of their execution; and having learned from them that they were all desirous before they left the world, to commemorate the death of the Saviour of mankind, by partaking of the eucharist, after the quarterly meeting was closed, liberty being granted by the keeper, and the elements for the eucharist being provided; we proceeded to enter the gloomy abode of these outcasts of society! Twenty or thirty persons were present, the most of whom were brethren: while the keeper was unlocking the complicated wards, we had time to contemplate on the solemn and important design of our visit there; but the opening of the huge door, and the voice of the keeper saying, "*come in,*" laid a suspension upon our meditations for a while. We entered! and lo! the strong iron-barred apartment, the awful nightly shades that haunt there perpetually, the pale, sickly countenances of a number of human beings walking there together, with the doleful sound of the clanking and rattling of their chains upon the floor! waked all the sympathies of our hearts, and inspired sensations not easily to be described. After some friendly ceremonies were passed, I had the prisoners all seated on a bench together, and we enjoyed what other accommodations the place afforded. I then proceeded to interrogate the prisoners, one at a time, concerning their conversion, and they all gave a satisfactory evidence that the change they professed to have experienced was truly wrought of God. They appeared at once both solemn and cheerful, and manifested much of the meek and harmless disposition of the dove. I proceeded next to unfold to their view the sacred solemnities of the institution of the eucharist, to which they all gave an interested attention.

The elements for consecration were then presented to view; but never before did I behold the sacred symbols of our Saviour's body and blood, exhibited in such a place as this; I thought of this passage written by the prophet Isaiah, which our Saviour read on the sabbath-day in the synagogue of the Jews. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal

the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised " I could but feel grateful to God, that a Saviour was provided for man; that he was just such an one as poor sinners needed. This sacred and faithful saying, "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," is enough to make creation shout for joy. What an act of stupendous mercy, that the God of salvation should grace such abodes as these with his presence, and smile with forgiving love on such flagrant objects of human justice! Truly it is the Lord's doings, but it is marvellous in our eyes!

After we had sung a hymn appropriate to the occasion, we bowed before the Lord, to supplicate his blessing upon us; it was a moment of deep concern and engagedness;—no sooner had our prayers left these gloomy walls, and ascended into heaven, than lo! the Lord of glory came down in power and love, and filled the prison with his presence! the place seemed no other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven: I then fully felt the poet's language, "That prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there."

The elements being consecrated, I proceeded to administer the sacred symbols to these disciples in chains; who upon the bended knee, received it with apparent reverence, solemnity and gratitude; and after this scene was closed, we were about to take our leave of them, when the *keeper* requested the prisoners to sing us a farewell hymn, which they accordingly did with much zeal and devotion.

Then under the gloomy apprehension of never seeing them any more in time, unless on the awful day of their execution, we commended them to God, and bid them all a final adieu.

The public mind became so deeply affected with the situation of these prisoners, seeing the wonderful change that had taken place in them, that they could not endure the thought that they should be executed: petitions were immediately sent to the legislature, then in session, entreating for them to be reprieved; accordingly an act was passed, changing the circumstances of their fate from the dreadful sentence of death, to hard labour and confinement in State-prison, in the village of Auburn; where they now remain, one of whom has backsliden, but all of the others continue steadfast in the faith, and persevering in their religious course.

CHARLES GILES.

Religious and Missionary Intelligence.

ACCOUNT OF THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN ONEIDA DISTRICT,
IN THE GENESEE CONFERENCE.

To the Editors of the Methodist Magazine.

Utica, August 2, 1818.

DEAR BRETHREN,

BEING desirous to glorify God by proclaiming the triumphs of Immanuel's kingdom, and to gratify the pious who are animated by every breeze of religious intelligence, I am induced to make the following communications, relative to the work of God upon my District. During the lapse of this auspicious year, which will long be remembered by many with sensations of delight, we have enjoyed numerous seasons gloriously marked with the benedictions of the Adorable Redeemer. The watchmen have evidently enjoyed the happy influence of the harmonizing power of the Gospel; their industry and zeal in their holy vocation have proved the sincerity of their motives, and their deep-felt concern for the interests of Zion. The word has been attended with divine sanction, and the work has been forming a prosperous aspect; while some have been seeking for pardon through the blood of Christ, others have been breathing for perfect love. The windows of heaven have been opened to us; peace and salvation have descended like dew upon the hills of Zion; light has broken into the abodes of darkness, and the wretched have been made to rejoice.

Of the many instances wherein grace has been triumphantly displayed I shall take time to particularize but a few.

At a Camp-meeting on Litchfield circuit in September last, the Lord was very gracious; the season being cold and rainy, rendered our situation in the tented wilderness very unpleasant; but these gloomy circumstances did not impede the work of grace: both preachers and people, were zealously affected in the good cause. About one hundred souls professed to be converted to God at that meeting. All our Camp-meetings were attended with salutary consequences: hundreds are now rejoicing that they even saw those consecrated groves, where the word first penetrated their hearts, and where they first felt the renovating power of grace.

Black River Circuit has been highly favoured of the Lord: about three hundred have been added to the societies on that circuit this year; and it is worthy of remark, that one of the subjects of this reformation was a young man both deaf and dumb;

who had a very remarkable view of the glory of heaven, and the misery of hell, which, by his expressive signs, he communicated to me: he appeared very happy and devoted to God.— Another subject of this work was a man who had been a long time in despair; for several years he had wholly neglected his temporal concerns; but through divine mercy his bands were loosed, and his long imprisoned soul was brought into the liberty of the children of God.

Westmoreland Circuit has been also honoured with the illustrious presence of the king of Israel; many there have flocked to the blood-stained standard: twenty-three souls professed to be converted to God in one evening after quarterly meeting on that circuit! Praise the Lord, for great and marvellous are his works among the sons of men.

At a quarterly meeting held on Otsego Circuit the divine presence overspread the assembly, and like a celestial cloud filled the house; the crowded congregation stood like statues, listening to the word with deep concern, which was delivered from these words, "As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." As the service was drawing to a close, it seemed that the heavens were bowed, and the Spirit of the Lord was there in power. After the closing prayer, as we were descending the pulpit stairs, I saw a man advancing towards the altar, whose appearance indicated that he had passed the meridian of his mortal existence. As I approached him he reached to me his trembling hand, which plainly betrayed the agitation of his mind; he clasped my hand with a degree of earnestness, and said, "Is there mercy for such a sinner as I?" I pointed to the sacred volume which lay on the desk above, and assured him that it contained large promises for sinners; he then manifested greater earnestness, and seized my hand with both of his, and said, "Is it possible that such an old sinner can find mercy?" I continued to enforce the promises of the Gospel, that God would accept all who would come to him through faith in Christ. The general agitation of his body still evidenced the strong emotions of his mind; and his expressions relative to his own feelings, proved to us that his mortal system was almost overpowered by a sense of guilt, accumulated by the lapse of many years spent in vice and folly; being asked to kneel down with us that we might present his case before the throne of mercy, immediately he bowed down before his Maker; and while we were offering our devout supplications to heaven in behalf of the trembling penitent, others felt the influence of the Holy Spirit, so that they began to cry for mercy; and soon the mingled voices of prayer and lamentation filled the house.

The scene was so affecting that it was enough to move any heart not wholly dead to the tender sensibilities of humanity, to

see some so completely overpowered by divine impressions, that they were incapable of supporting themselves in extreme agony of mind, while others, less affected than they, stood weeping around them; pious parents embracing their lost returning children, and fervently imploring mercy for them with flowing eyes, while shouts of joy, and hymns of praise resounded in honour to God for the conversion of others. From the time of the commencement of this work, which was about three o'clock in the afternoon, there was no cessation of exercise until eleven o'clock at night. Eight souls professed to be converted to God before the meeting closed, and many others were powerfully impressed, who shortly after were enabled to rejoice in the fullness of pardoning grace. It is worthy of notice that some of the subjects of this work were triflers in the morning of that memorable day of their conversion. Truly this is the Lord's doings, but it is marvellous in our eyes.

I will now close this relation, by only adding, that about one thousand members have been united to our church this year, on the district; but in consequence of many emigrating to the Western country, there appears on the minutes an increase of only seven hundred and forty.

I am, dear Brethren,

yours affectionately,

CHARLES GILES.

Obituary.

DEATH OF JOHN DAVIES.

To the Editors of the Methodist Magazine.

It is said, *The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.* And it seems to have been a complaint that the Almighty made at a certain time, that *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart.*

Among those whose Christian virtues deserve to be remembered, as worthy of imitation, we may reckon our lately deceased brother JOHN DAVIES. Although he has left no written documents behind him, from which we might correctly ascertain the particular incidents of his life, yet from his surviving friends, in whose memory he will long live, and from an intimate ac-

quaintance I had with him for a considerable time, you may, I think, depend on the following particulars as substantially correct.

He was born in WALES, in the year 1745. In his twenty-fifth year he was converted to God. This important event was brought about in the following manner, which, while it affords a testimony in favour of his early impressions of piety, evinces the invaluable benefits communicated to man through the scripture of truth. From impressions he had received from his pious mother, it seems he had contracted such a veneration for the Bible,

that seeing some scattered leaves of the New Testament, lying neglected, he picked them up, and deposited them in his chest. At this time, he was attached to the army. One day having a leisure hour, he employed it in reading those sacred pages he had so carefully secured from destruction. As he read concerning the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, his heart was touched, and he was suddenly awakened to a sense of his lost and guilty state. From this auspicious moment he resolved by the grace of God, to seek the Lord, which he accordingly did, and never rested until he found redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Soon after this he became acquainted with the Methodist people, with whom he united himself, and with whom he continued in Christian fellowship until the day of his death.

While connected with the army, he was instrumental in raising two classes, and was the Leader of them both. So uniform was his Christian conduct, and so exemplary his piety, that while the confidence of his pious associates in his integrity was unshaken, his wicked companions in arms were in continual fear of him.

From the best information now to be obtained, he came to the City of New-York some time in the year 1768, and finding a Methodist Society here, he immediately made himself known, and united himself to it. His piety, zeal, and usefulness soon recommended him to the responsible office of a class-leader, which office, with great usefulness and acceptance, he held until his death. Such indeed was his fidelity to God, and his indefatigable industry in the cause of Christ, that few, who have moved in the same limited sphere, are qualified to supply his vacated place, and follow his steps with equal speed.

The following traits of his character, and which were mentioned in his funeral sermon, will, I doubt not, be recognized by all who knew him.

1. His unshaken confidence in Jesus Christ. On Him he relied with undeviating constancy amid all the trials to which he was subjected. From that faith in the Redeemer which works by love, resulted a uniform obedience to the commandments of God.

2. His deep communion with God. This manifested itself in all his exterior deportment, whether in the house of God or out of it. The cheerful solemnity of his countenance, the gratitude and reverence with which he spoke of

God, and the honest simplicity with which he related his experience of divine things, as well as the minuteness with which he noticed the providential dealings of God towards him, all indicated a heart replete with a sense of the divine presence.

3 His inviolable integrity. Love of justice and mercy, two of the cardinal virtues which constitute the Christian character, shone conspicuously in the conduct of our departed brother, and induced his fellow citizens to confide in his integrity at all times. Justice exhibited itself in all his intercourse with men, and in so eminent a degree, that I believe the most rigid observer of his conduct was never heard to utter a suspicious murmur respecting him. And his benevolence was no less visible, as far as his limited means enabled him to exert himself in his attention to the various charitable institutions, established in our city for the benefit of the poor. The Methodist Charity School, over which he watched with the solicitude and tenderness of a Father, is greatly indebted to him for the regularity with which it is conducted, and for the benefits it confers upon destitute children.

4. His deep and genuine humility. When asked if he had kept any record of his experience, he replied to this effect, "I never thought any part of my life of sufficient importance to publish to the world." All indeed he said of himself indicated a thorough acquaintance with his own heart, and a deep sense of his own unworthiness.

5. His great love of order in the Church. No man was ever more attentive to the established authorities of the church to which he belonged, firmly believing her doctrines, and adhering, with a scrupulous exactness, to her discipline and government; well knowing that a scriptural subordination is as essential to the welfare of the Church, as obedience to the constituted authorities of a state is to the existence of civil community.—Those who duly appreciate the importance of sacred music in the church of God will long remember with gratitude the efforts of our much lamented brother, in improving the congregation in this delightful part of divine worship. Though not competent to lead himself, yet he laboured with assiduity in encouraging others to the study and practice of sacred melody, directing and advising them with all the tenderness of a father.

6. His plainness of dress, and simplicity of manners, reminded one of the primitive days of Christianity, and recommended him as an example worthy the imitation of all professors of religion.

7. His unconquerable hatred to sin, and his supreme love to God, induced him to treat bold violators of the law of God and discipline of the church, with a commendable severity, mixed, however with that Christian meekness and moderation, which convinced the unhappy delinquent that he aimed at his reformation, and not at his destruction. This disposition of mind, eminently qualified him for a useful counsellor to the ruling minister in that department of government so essential to preserve the peace and purity of the church. Though his information was not so comprehensive as many others, yet his judgment was sound, and his inflexible integrity entitled him to the confidence of those who knew him best. A virtue this so rare that it greatly enhances the worth of the man in whose heart it resides. And the writer of this has had more than one opportunity of proving JOHN DAVIES to have been a man worthy the confidence of his most intimate friends.

These are some of the prominent features of a character, which the more I contemplate, the more I admire. That he felt the common frailties of human nature, is certain; and perhaps no one was more sensible of his infirmities than he; but grace had so refined his heart, that while he exhibited the common weakness of human beings, he manifested in all his deportment the stern virtues of a genuine follower of Christ. That such a man should have enemies is a melancholy proof of the sad degeneracy of the human heart. But while he evinced the spirit of his great master in forgiving injuries, death has removed him far beyond the influence of malice and envy.

Having passed the common boundaries of human life, and being frequently attacked by sickness, it could not be expected he would much longer remain an inhabitant of this world. He had not been long recovered from a paralytic stroke, which deprived him of much of his native energy, when he was assailed with a fever which threatened his speedy dissolution. Contrary, however, to general expectation, the Lord raised him once more to comparative health, so that he occa-

sionally visited his friends, and met his classes, for he had three under his care. During this illness, he was resigned and happy. One Sabbath morning, he said to me, "This is the happiest morning I ever witnessed. My mind had been labouring under peculiar trials; but the Lord Jesus has appeared for my deliverance, and caused my soul to rejoice in his salvation."—During this interview, he related with a lively sense of gratitude to God, some incidents of his life, in which the goodness of God had been manifested to him, and on which he seemed to dwell with peculiar pleasure.

Though he so far recovered from this severe attack, as to move in his customary sphere of usefulness, it was but a prelude to a more unrelenting disorder, which soon terminated his useful life. The suddenness and severity with which it assailed him, soon produced those alarming symptoms, which deprived his kind physician, and his numerous friends, of all hope of his restoration to health. Although he suffered much bodily pain, his mind was preserved in tranquility, and frequently his heart overflowed with joy unspeakable. Having been solemnly devoted to God for forty-eight years, during which time he had experienced bright manifestations of God's love to his soul, he now looked forward, and joyfully anticipated not only a release from his sufferings, but that consummation of bliss reserved in heaven for those who persevere to the end in well doing.

The night on which he died, perceiving his sufferings to be extremely painful, it was said to him by a friend who stood by him, "your sufferings are great." To which the aged veteran of the cross of Christ answered, "If they were ten thousand times greater, they would all be mercies." Soon after, with his eyes directed towards heaven he said,

"Open the intercourse between,
My longing soul and Thee,
Never to be broke of again,
To all eternity."

In this tranquil state of mind, with a firm reliance upon the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, and a well grounded hope of future felicity, he terminated his present mode of existence on the morning of the 30th of December 1818, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

If a numerous assemblage of Christian friends, convened to carry "A

brother to the tomb," their solemnity, their tears, and their expressions of unfeigned mourning, may be considered a test of esteem and affection for a deceased brother. John Davies had a very strong testimony in his favour; for his funeral rites were performed

amidst a large concourse of Christian friends and acquaintances, all of whom seemed to say, *There lies the man whom the king delighteth to honour, approved of God, and beloved of men.*

N. BANGS.

New-York, Jan. 14th, 1819.

Poetry.

THE EFFECTS OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE NEGROES.

THE progress of the Gospel in the West-India Islands has frequently afforded pleasure to the lovers of Zion in this country. Many thousands of the poor slaves are now emancipated from their spiritual bondage, and brought into the enjoyment of Christian liberty, by the instrumentality of the Moravian and Methodist Missionaries, and "the fields are still white to the harvest." The following lines, taken from Montgomery's Poems, on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, give a pleasing description of the effects of Gospel Truth upon the converted Negroes, and will probably be acceptable to our readers.

AND thou, poor Negro! scorn'd of all mankind,
Thou dumb and impotent, and deaf and blind!
Thou dead in spirit! toil degraded slave,
Crush'd by the curse on Adam to the grave!
The Messengers of Peace, o'er land and sea,
That sought the sons of sorrow, stoop'd to thee.
The captive rais'd his slow and sullen eye;
He knew no friend, nor deem'd a friend was nigh,
Till the sweet tones of pity touch'd his ears,
And mercy bath'd his bosom with her tears:
Strange were those tones, to him those tears
were strange,
He wept, and wonder'd at the mighty change,
Felt the quick pang of keen compunction dart,
And heard a still, small whisper in his heart,
A voice from heaven, that bade the outcast rise
From shame on earth to glory in the skies.

From Isle to Isle the welcome tidings ran,
The slave that heard them, started into man;
Like Peter, sleeping in his chains he lay,

The Angel came, his night was turn'd to day;
'Arise!' his fetters fall, his slumbers flee;
He wakes to life, he springs to liberty.

No more to demon gods, in hideous forms,
He pray'd for earthquakes, pestilence and storms.
In secret agony devour'd the earth,*
And, while he spar'd his mother, curst his birth:
To heaven the Christian negro sent his sighs
In morning vows, and evening sacrifice;
He pray'd for blessings to descend on those
That dealt to him the cup of many woes,
Thought of his home in Africa forlorn,
Yet, while he wept, rejoic'd that he was born;
No longer, burning with unholy fires,
He wallow'd in the dust of base desires;
Ennobling virtue fix'd his hopes above,
Enlarg'd his heart, and sanctified his love,
With humble steps the paths of peace he trod,
A happy pilgrim, for he walk'd with God.

* This and the following line might be scarcely intelligible to a reader unacquainted with the facts to which they refer. The first, alludes to the desperate and fatal practice of *earth eating*, among the disconsolate slaves; the second, to the Negro proverb, mentioned by Park, "*Strike me, but do not curse my mother.*"